

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)****BY THE  
STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES****A. STATEMENT OF INTENT:**

The State of Tennessee, Department of Children's Services (DCS) issues this Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of soliciting information from the vendor community and all other interested parties that will be used to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP). The services will be related to designing, developing and delivering innovative and alternative pre-service training statewide for entry level Child Welfare Case Managers and in-service training for all levels of Child Welfare Case Managers, Supervisors and Management. The mission, vision, values, and best practice principles of DCS and child welfare practice must be incorporated into the context of these critical areas. The information will be garnered through a series of presentations delivered by interested parties to a select committee of DCS employees and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) established pursuant to the Brian A. Settlement Agreement.

**B. BACKGROUND:**

Pursuant to DCS policy (<http://www.state.tn.us/youth/policies/chapter5.htm>) and Civil Action No. 3-00-0445, Brian A. Settlement Agreement, DCS is mandated to "provide comprehensive child welfare training to ensure that all persons responsible for children in the plaintiff class will have sufficient training to permit them to comply with the relevant mandates of this Settlement Agreement, DCS policy, and reasonable professional standards" <http://www.state.tn.us/youth/pdf/files/settlement.pdf>.

DCS employees directly responsible for children are identified as Child Welfare Case Managers. Child Welfare Case Managers are assigned to one of the following DCS program areas:

- ✓ Child protective services (CPS);
- ✓ Foster care;
- ✓ Adoptions.

Child Welfare Case Managers perform a complex slate of case management activities, which involves but is not limited to the coordination, management and documentation of interviews with children and families at risk of commitment to DCS custody and those children committed to DCS custody. Additional responsibilities include: visits to homes, schools and residential placements where children reside, appearances in court hearings, case review boards, collaborative work with community partners such as mental health centers, law enforcement, daycare/school and medical personnel, as well as DCS contracted providers. Child Welfare Case Managers must be capable of making risk-based decisions of moderate to significant difficulty regarding the safety and welfare of children and families through the use of policy and procedure, assessment protocols, and supervisory guidance. The goal of child welfare case management is to maintain or achieve a permanent, stable environment for all children and youth that become actual or prospective clients of DCS.

Child welfare pre-service and in-service training includes basic child welfare practice knowledge, understanding and skills application. It should prepare Child Welfare Case Managers for work in DCS and to accept the assignment of a child welfare caseload.

New Case Managers Certification Training (pre-service) prepares new case managers for their child welfare responsibilities and is an essential function of DCS. The training conveys the scope of case managers' jobs within the context of DCS and the professional practices of social work and child welfare. The content also identifies and develops the essential competencies at an appropriate level for new staff engaged in highly sensitive and complex work. The certification component lays the groundwork for continued professional development to include selected in-service courses based on program area (i.e., Facilitating the Child and Family Team Meeting, Developing the Family Plan, Interdependent Living, Legally Defensible Interviewing, etc.).

The in-service component of training involves implementing a family focused, strengths-based training program for Child Welfare Case Managers that also prepares supervisors and administrative staff to support the transfer of skills into the job.

Training will also include the retraining of existing Child Welfare Case Managers by providing them with intensive instruction in the content that new Child Welfare Case Managers receive and the opportunity to be certified as a Child Welfare Case Manager.

Supervisors will be trained in the Supervisors' Version of New Case Management Training, which will enable them to include coaching, mentoring and other competencies related to the educative role of the supervisor.

DCS will use information provided to this RFI to formulate the scope of services and delivery requirements for the pre-service and in-service training. The information will be incorporated into a competitive RFP process intended to secure a contract for the services.

C. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

DCS seeks information from all interested parties that addresses, provides examples, and/or explains how to develop and deliver premium, program-specific pre-service and in-service training that efficiently enables Child Welfare Case Managers throughout the State of Tennessee to achieve optimal performance as Child Welfare Case Managers in a minimum amount of time. In particular DCS seeks information regarding:

- developing program specific (e.g., child protective services, foster care, or adoptions) technical training;
- technologies for designing and delivering Child Welfare Case Manager pre-service and in-service training;
- adult learning theory and practices for delivering Child Welfare Case Manager pre-service and in-service training;
- tools and practices to support Child Welfare Case Managers with American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements;
- developing uniform curriculums for statewide delivery within specific time frames, but which both allows for staff to move through content mastery at his/her own pace and lessens the reliance on classroom training;
- requirements for instructor and trainee materials;
- developing and administering evaluation instruments;
- training design that supports curriculum modifications and enhancements with minimum difficulty; and
- identifying, evaluating, and responding to staff development needs.

D. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDING

The following individual will be DCS' main contact for the RFI if you have any questions. Please call to schedule a date and time you would like to make your presentation. Presentations will be limited to one hour:

Steven Barlar, Program Specialist  
Department of Children's Services  
Contracts & Grants Management Unit  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Cordell Hull Building  
436 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville, TN 37243-1290

Phone: (615) 532-2457  
Facsimile Number: (615) 244-8969

Please respond on or before **January 23, 2004** by calling Mr. Barlar to schedule an appointment during the days and times identified below. If any special accommodations will be required for your presentation please articulate your needs to Mr. Barlar so that arrangements can be made to accommodate your requests. Presentations will be limited to one-hour at the following address:

Department of Children's Services  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Cordell Hull Building  
**Conference Room A**  
Nashville, TN 37243-1290

One-hour (or less) presentations will be scheduled on the days identified below:

February 02, 2004	9.a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
February 03, 2004	9.a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
February 04, 2005	9.a.m. – 2:00 p.m.